

who would have roadblocked me in my ambuscaded house.
The afternoon melted down to cramps in my legs;
nothing came but local license plates.
Then, as I was coming from my catcher's crouch,
a car-carrier passed, loaded with Hudson-Teraplanes.
In the maroon Tudor, slanted on that rattling hill,
a face rose like a slow balloon behind the windshield,
looked darkly about and floated down, away.

The spectral streetlight spilled sodden terror
by the hedge where I stood watching my father
and his fellows still at the supper table
tossing their relieved whiskies and growing loud:
' ... miles from here in the opposite direction ...'
and all the depression bums quaking in their boots ...'
My secret quaked in the toe and heel depths of my mind.
In that dark face, bum's or bandit's, was what
had dimmed all our darkened days, and I knew then that
I would carry it my years like the
black-rimmed portrait of a Rouault king.

-- Richard Snyder

Ashland, Ohio

the buried cannonball in lake superior

i am round and rusty and pitted
i love my shape and i never have to
lose weight but i do without
trying i get pitted with age my
pieces fall off so i guess ill
just stay here in lake superior losing weight.

the root.

nice to be a root in fact
very nice to be a root its
dark down here under the ground
being a root is great people cant
see you when you do things that
offend people on the surface who
get offended at people who do
things in the light up there but
down here i just sit and do offending
things in the dark and think how nice
it is to be a root

-- Patrick J. Coffey

Levittown, New York